



Aspira of America, Inc.

Annual Report



Fiscal Year 1980-81

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The cover:

Our cover this year captures our students in a diversity of activities. The center photo is that of a sculpture executed by Puerto Rican artist Melquiades Rosario Sastre, depicting Aspira's emblem, "El Pitirre," a small bird indigenous to Puerto Rico which despite its small size does not hesitate to confront and defeat much larger birds. To the *Aspirante*, the message is clear: No matter the obstacle, it can be overcome when there is inspiration and courage.

Cover design and editing: Ana María Díaz-Stevens.

The above three areas of new endeavors are responses to the challenge and Aspira's response is consistent with its tradition of self-help programing that has permeated the agency since its inception 21 years ago.

Attentive to Don Quijote's advice and the needs of the times we prefer to take the adventure of the road. ✓

Les saludamos,

María Santiago Mercado
Chairperson

Mario A. Anglada
National Executive Director

ASPIRA Means To Aspire

Puerto Ricans were living in the United States more than 140 years ago, when Puerto Rico was still a part of the Spanish Empire. A dozen years after the United States took over Puerto Rico in 1898, the Bureau of the Census noted 1,513 Puerto Ricans in the Continental United States. By 1940 there were approximately 70,000 Puerto Ricans living in the United States mainland; ten years later this population had more than quadrupled and in the following decade it nearly tripled, so that by the early 1960's the Puerto Rican population in the United States numbered approximately 720,000.

In 1961, of the 620,000 Puerto Ricans reportedly living in New York, fewer than 150 entered college. That same year Aspira of New York, Inc., was organized by a group of concerned Puerto Rican professional men and women who believed that the leadership and educational potential of Puerto Ricans in New York City was a virtually untapped resource. They were determined to develop that potential in order that Puerto Ricans themselves might eventually provide the leadership and assistance which their community so desperately needed and which in the long run would benefit the entire society. This they sought to accomplish by providing the necessary help and encouragement to young Puerto Ricans to complete high school, to pursue further studies, and to develop a lasting commitment to work for the betterment of their communities.

Today the Puerto Rican population based in the Continental United States numbers nearly 2 million persons and is rapidly increasing. Historically the Puerto Rican community in the United States has been a very young one. At present its median age is 19 years. Thus, education has been traditionally viewed as a logical means to achieve social change. Education divorced from concern and commitment to others, however, is a limited value in terms of community building. Cognizant of this, Aspira was inspired to orient students not only towards the acquisition of knowledge and greater professionalism, but also towards a deeper appreciation of their cultural roots and a comprehensive assessment of their community's needs and resources.

The year 1981 marked the 20th anniversary of Aspira's presence in New York and the 12th anniversary of Aspira of America as a national organization. At present, in addition to its national headquarters housed

in New York, Aspira has associate offices in New York City, Pennsylvania, New Jersey, Illinois, and the Commonwealth of Puerto Rico. In 1978 monies were procured for Aspira's Center for Educational Equity (ACEE) based in Washington, D.C., and in 1980 an affiliate was opened in Miami, Florida, to respond to the growing needs of a rapidly increasing Hispanic community in the area. Leaders in other areas with high concentrations of Puerto Ricans and Hispanics, such as Delaware, Massachusetts, Connecticut, Ohio, Wisconsin and California, have expressed an interest in becoming part of the Aspira network and the agency is at present seriously considering the possibility of expansion.

In each area where Aspira is active, the local agency has considerable independence of action in formulating policies and programs that are



Mario A. Anglada, National Executive Director, Aspira of America.

best suited to the particular community. However, Aspira associate and affiliate agencies also take part in joint national programs. Aspira of America provides the associates and affiliates with funds and with technical assistance services to help them in proposing, managing and evaluating both their local and national program activities.

In the course of twenty years Aspira has indeed become an effective agent of social change. This is attested to by the lives of thousands of young Puerto Ricans and other minority groups members who having gone through the Aspira process are now working in myriad professions, making a better life for themselves, their families and their communities.

In this regards, Aspira's success has been summed up by Harvard-trained sociologist Joseph P. Fitzpatrick when he said:

Of all the grass-roots organizations of the Puerto Rican community, ASPIRA has probably been the most effective. It has become nationally known and its service to Puerto Rican youth has been remarkable. Many of the young people now coming out of colleges and professional schools received their early encouragement and guidance from ASPIRA . . . they have established ASPIRA clubs in many high schools . . . In terms of solid and tangible achievement, probably no other Puerto Rican organization can show as much evidence of accomplishment as ASPIRA. ✍

High School Clubs

The high school years are particularly critical. This is when many young people in our community drop out of school, or settle for low-skill, low-pay jobs, thus resigning themselves and their families to the lowest socio-economic level for the rest of their lives.

Aspira's High School Club system tries to bring together Puerto Ricans, Hispanics and other minority youths in an environment where they can become actively involved in a democratic political process to play and implement socially useful activities and learn to interact with others in positive ways.

In the year 1980-81 Aspira High School Clubs within the different sites Aspira's associate work, touched the lives of approximately 2,000 active members.

Club goals and activities are determined by the students, and deal mainly with educational and community issues. By taking the floor in elections and discussions, students learn to articulate their ideas, to overcome their shyness, to test ideas against reality, and to take on responsibilities of a community-wide nature. By taking part in social, cultural, athletic and vocational activities which are part of the club agenda, youth are

exposed to positive stimuli, and learn that they can play a role in improving the quality of their lives.

Aspira provides guidance to each club through community organizers and their aides. They are trainers, teachers, and motivators, and their job is to organize the clubs, so that members develop leadership abilities.

In recent years, the club system has been strengthened and expanded due to Federal grants from the Law Enforcement Assistance Administration (LEAA) of the United States Justice Department. 4

LEAA Funded Projects

AMANECE AND ARMONÍA

One of these grants was for Aspira's "*Proyecto Amanece*" (Project Dawn), which aimed to deter youth crime in several cities by involving young people in a variety of positive activities. The "*Amanece*" project was focused particularly on youths ages 14 to 18 who were either low achievers or school dropouts. "*Amanece*" was funded for three years, through December 1980.

Another LEAA program was "*Proyecto Armonía*" (Project Harmony) which carried out its activities over a two-year period ending February 1980. This program, like that of "*Amanece*," was designed to reach youth ages 14 to 18. Participants included members of both an in-school and an out-school populations. The program sought to involve the young people in club organization and in outreach to community groups effort.

ENTRE IGUALES

Starting in 1980, LEAA provided a \$1 million grant to Aspira to carry out a new two-year program of Peer Counseling called "*Proyecto Entre Iguales: Aspirantes Helping Peers*."

Most of Aspira's programs focus on helping average to above-average students in furthering their education. In this innovative Peer Counseling Program, students (Aspirantes) have been recruited and trained to reach out to their juvenile peers who were doing poorly in school, or who had dropped out, and whose socioeconomic profile indicated that they were a "high risk" category that could result in their becoming involved in delinquent behavior. "Each one, teach one" is the program's mandate to Aspirantes. With the guidance of Aspira staff, the Aspirantes are serving as a link between these troubled youth and their schools, as well as community youth service organization.

Since the inception of the program in February 1981, it has been active in five cities and has aided 300 Aspirantes reach out to 200 "high risk" juvenile peers. The program has generated regular "feedback" reports to cooperating agencies and schools, recommending means by which to improve the quality of services they provide. ✓

National Health Careers Program

Aspira's National Health Careers Program has been one of the agency's most successful efforts. Launched in 1970 by Aspira of New York initially at the local level with a \$10,000 grant, it later became national in scope. For the last 12 years the program has sought:

1. to improve the quality of health care delivered to the Hispanic community;
2. to increase the number of Hispanics completing their medical education; and
3. to have the students return to service the Hispanic community after completion of their medical education.

A year after the initial grant, the National Urban Coalition awarded the program an additional \$75,000. In 1974, Aspira of America received a 16-month \$250,000 grant from HEW's National Institute of Health, to implement a National Health Careers Program, operating at all of Aspira's Associates. The first year of the counseling program was significant. Eight students from the Puerto Rican community were accepted to medical schools. This may appear to be a small number, but it represented nearly *one-third of all* the Puerto Rican students from the United States who were allowed entry to medical schools that year.

In 1974, NIH transferred the administration of the program to the Public Health Services (PHS). At present the National Health Careers Program consists of two units: the Pre-Health Professions Unit financed by the Public Health Service, and the Health Professions Unit financed by the Robert Wood Johnson Foundation. The former works specifically with high school students, and the latter works with students who are in their junior year of college, helping them secure enrollment in professional schools, and to some extent with students already in medical schools.

Through the Health Careers Clubs established in urban areas with large concentrations of Puerto Ricans and other Hispanics, the program provides for consultation to students wishing to pursue careers in the health professions, remedial and tutorial support, and placement in summer enrichment programs at institutions such as the College of Medicine

and Dentistry of New Jersey, Cornell, Georgetown, Harvard, Indiana and New York Universities. Other services provided by the program include "outreach" and handling of walk-ins, lecturers, annual college conferences, workshops on securing financial aid, trips to colleges, visits to health service sites and linkages with health institutions and key health professionals. For example, in past years the College of Medicine and Dentistry in New Jersey has cosponsored the Aspira Health Career Conference; the Dean of the University of Puerto Rico Medical School has participated in the Interview Skills Workshop as well as collaborated as an instructor for the MCAT review course; the Annual Medical School/Health Professional School Conference has been co-sponsored by the Mt. Sinai Medical School in New York.

As a result of the program's successes in its 12 years of existence, other professional schools look to Aspira as a source of qualified applicants. And while it has placed more Puerto Ricans than Hispanics and other minority students, Puerto Ricans are not the only beneficiaries of this program. For the year 1980-81, Aspira's National Health Careers Program has assisted in the placement of 64 students in health professional schools. Of those, 4 were classified as black, 1 as Columbian, 3 as Cuban, 4 as Mexican-American, 43 as Puerto Rican (living in the mainland) and 9 as coming from other Hispanic groups. Placement into the Pre-Med/Pre-Dental Summer Program, for that same year, consisted of 33 students, among which the following race and national groups were represented: black, Korean, Dominican, Cuban, Mexican-American, Puerto Rican and other Hispanics.

As of January 1, 1982, there were 793 students enrolled in Aspira's National Health Careers Program. Of these 68 percent were planning careers in medicine, 5 percent in dentistry, 23 percent in pharmacy, veterinary science, ophthalmology and podiatry. The remaining 4 percent of the program's participants had not yet decided the area of specialization.

Notwithstanding the program's achievements since its beginnings, it is important to note that mainland Puerto Rican medical entrants represent only .5 percent of the total medical school enrollment. Although this percentage figure represents a large increase over the past decade, the actual number of Puerto Rican entrants remain relatively small in relation to the size and needs of the total mainland Puerto Rican population. The same is true of Hispanic health professionals as compared to the total Hispanic population in the United States. This problem is accentuated by the fact that the percentage of Puerto Rican and Hispanic entrants is not keeping par with increases in their populations, and that of those who enroll not all complete their studies and become physicians. The end result is that while the total Hispanic population — including Puerto

Ricans — at present makes up 8 percent of the total United States population, their physicians comprise less than 3 percent of the total physical supply. With rapidly increasing Puerto Rican and Hispanic populations, the gap between needs and resources in this, as well as in other areas of vital concern, continues to grow wider and wider. Thus, the need for Aspira's National Health Careers Program continues to be very real. And while Aspira recognizes that the problem has not been solved in its totality and that the shortage of health professionals in the Puerto Rican and Hispanic communities is an ever present reality, it is also confident that through its National Health Careers Program a measure of tangible progress is indeed being made. ✓

Advocacy and Research

Aspira is a firm advocate of quality education for Puerto Ricans and other minority groups.

The National Executive Director of Aspira of America is a frequent visitor to Washington, D.C. where he maintains contacts with Federal officials whose decisions affect the education of millions of Hispanic students.

Through its top officials and staff members, Aspira plays an active role in maintaining coalitions with other Puerto Rican community organizations, and with major Hispanic and black leadership groups. For example, Aspira of America actively supports the National Puerto Rican Coalition, the National Committee for Black and Hispanic Concerns, and the Forum of Hispanic Organizations.

Aspira also collaborates with a diversity of organizations and agencies related to education and employment. For example, the Executive Director of Aspira of New Jersey is at present the Chairperson for the Hispanic Association of Higher Education of New Jersey, and the Executive Director of Aspira of Illinois has served as a member of the Illinois State Board of Education appointed by the Governor. Currently he is serving on the Employment Training Councils at the state (Illinois) and city (Chicago) levels, and on a special commission to monitor Chicago's schools desegregation program.

Since the Federal government is a major source of educational funding and policy, Aspira deems it essential to have a permanent presence in Washington, D.C., the nation's capital. Fiscal year 1980-81 marked the third year of operation of the Aspira Center for Educational Equity

(ACEE) in Washington, D.C., which is supported primarily by grants from the Ford Foundation and the National Institute for Education (NIE).

ACEE: ASPIRA CENTER FOR EDUCATIONAL EQUITY

The overall concern of ACEE has been to enhance the means for research to be oriented and organized to improve the schooling of Puerto Ricans and other Hispanics. Major barriers to developing these means are: the small number of researchers who are oriented and organized to meet policy needs; the lack of Hispanic (especially Puerto Rican) involvement in policy-making processes; the lack of organized ways of stimulating, sharing and presenting quality research that meets policy needs, and the lack of knowledge about Hispanic education research among established researchers, and particularly, among Federal officials concerned with research interests and program responsibilities. Accordingly, ACEE serves as a linking agent between researchers concerned with Hispanic education, decision-makers who influence policy, and advocates for the Hispanic student.

ACEE's four major objectives are:

1. To contribute to knowledge about Hispanic education through research and development;
2. To foster participation of Hispanics in education research through fellowships, internships and networking;
3. To disseminate information about Hispanic education to policy-makers and practitioners;
4. To influence policy development through advocacy based on knowledge development.

ACEE contributes to knowledge about Hispanic education by commissioning senior researchers and analysts to develop original research as well as state-of-the-arts papers. It also is involved in organizing panels and task forces to stimulate further research through discussion, synthesis and agenda-building. The participation of Hispanics and others in educational research and development is fostered by ACEE through research assistantships in individualized placements with school district administrators and senior researchers. Internships are also provided at ACEE itself, with the sponsorship of other organizations, such as the Institute of Education Leadership (IEL), the Rockefeller Foundation, and the George Washington University Vocational Education Program.

ACEE is also involved in networking activities that provide for professional development and exchange between researchers in Hispanic education. It had an active role in organizing the Hispanic Special Interest Group of American Educational Research (AERA)

ACEE disseminates research findings and other information about Hispanic education through a diversity of instruments set up for this purpose. For example:

- Hispanic Forum for Responsive Educational Policy, a monthly forum for Federal officials that explores policy or research issues from an Hispanic perspective;
- Conferences and workshops conducted to highlight emerging or often neglected areas of concern;
- Presentations by the Coordinator and staff of ACEE at meetings, seminars and conferences held in various parts of the country.

ACEE also reaches out to a wide group of concerned influential readers by means of its quaterly news bulletin, *Cutting Edge*, and other written materials which are distributed free of charge.

METAS

Another important medium for research and advocacy is Aspira's journal, METAS, which commenced publication in late 1979 and appears on the average of three times a year. METAS— which has won praise for the high quality of its articles— is widely distributed among scholars, officials in government, corporations and foundations, community-based agency, executives and journalists. Issues of METAS have been ordered in bulk quantities for use in university courses. Likewise, the Department of Health and Human Services has a subscription for 200 copies which are used for purposes of dissemination among individuals, agencies and organizations related to education and educational policy.

Among the topics included in METAS the following are found: Federal Student Assistance Policy and Higher Education, Relative Educational Attainments of Hispanic-American Children, the Role of ESL in Bilingual Education, Suggestions for a National Information System on the Education of Puerto Ricans, Hispanics and Desegregation, Summary of Aspira's Study on Hispanic Segregation Trends in the U.S. School Districts, Admission and Retention Problems of Black Students at Seven Predominantly White Universities, and a profile of Cubans in South Florida, among many others. Two issues of METAS have been completely dedicated to a study each: Volume 2, Number 2 carries "An Analysis of Hispanic Doctoral Recipients from U.S. Universities (1900-1973) with Special Emphasis on Puerto Rican Doctorates," by Abdín Noboa-Ríos and Volume 3, Number 1 is dedicated to the findings of a study conducted by Gloria I. Méndez on "Bilingual Children's Adaptation After a Transitional Bilingual Education."

Aspira hopes to continue the important task of publishing research and policy analysis on education and related social issues as they affect

who is a product of the same cultural environment, is a sympathetic listener and a positive role model.

The counseling program also includes group discussions, workshops, lectures, help in selecting appropriate high school courses, tutoring, and help in applying for college admission, scholarship and loans. Aspira also helps to put students in touch with higher education by arranging fairs, inviting representatives from area colleges. Once in college, Aspirantes can still avail themselves of the agency's services. Many Aspirantes have, upon completion of college, returned to the agency to work as club organizers and counselors, thus reinforcing their commitment to help their community.

In 1980-81, Aspira's Associates in New York, New Jersey, Pennsylvania, Illinois and Puerto Rico and Aspira's affiliate in Miami were successful in placing approximately 2,000 students in vocational and professional schools, colleges and universities. Over the years, close to 37,000 Puerto Ricans and other minority youth have been enrolled in higher education thanks to Aspira's placement efforts.

The following report highlights some of the activities and accomplishments of Aspira's Associates and Affiliate in rendering a variety of services to Puerto Rican, Hispanic and minority youths during the year 1980-1981. ↙

Aspira of Florida

The youngest sister organization in the Aspira family is its Florida affiliate. Having acquired affiliate status from the national organization in 1980, Aspira of Florida began to directly serve the Puerto Rican and Hispanic youth of Miami in 1981. During its first year of existence, Aspira of Florida has extended services to 403 youngsters from seven schools in the communities of Wynwood, Allapatah and Edison Little River.

ENTRE IGUALES

The first program implemented by Aspira of Florida in the year 1981 was "Entre Iguales" funded by LEAA. Youngsters from one junior high and two high schools of the Wynwood area have been involved in this initial effort, where 65 peers helpers give counseling to 62 peers in individual and/or group counseling sessions. A control group of peers is maintained to evaluate change produced by the program. The program hopes to provide adequate evaluation and feedback to cooperating agencies and schools on the quality of service they extend to the young people



María Santiago-Mercado, Chairperson, National Board of Aspira of America, Inc.

and on ways the project can increase the agencies' capacity to continue to serve youth. At present the peer counseling program is the only one of its kind in Miami; that is, it is the only program which involves youth helping youth.

ARMONIA

Studies on crime in general, and juvenile crime in particular, consistently focus on two factors which seem to correlate with the level of crime in a given area. The first factor, as reported in Illinois State Crime Commission Report (January 1977), is the role of peer group pressure as a major cause of criminal behavior. The second factor, emphasized in the New York State Criminal Justice Coordinating Council Comprehensive

Crime Control Plan (1976), is the role of structural and social factors in causing criminal behavior.

A grant from the City of Miami provided the necessary funding of Aspira of Florida's crime prevention program among Hispanic youth. Closely resembling a previous project funded by LEAA at the national level, this program also adopted the name "*Armonía*" and guidelines responding to the aforementioned areas of concern: structural and social factors and the role of peer group pressure as related to criminal behavior. Aspira believes that in any crime prevention project both juveniles and adults must be involved in a constructive process as primary participants in order to effectively prevent delinquency.

The stated purpose of Aspira Community Anti-Crime Program is to reduce the incidence of crime within specified target areas by directly involving young people, ages 14 to 18, and adults of the same areas in a series of community crime prevention and community development activities. These activities are geared to:

- protect against the root causes of crime;
- establish and maintain meaningful relationship and communication with the community, the local law enforcement agencies and the justice administration system;
- examine and implement positive youth development activities which are based in the community

A unique feature of the Aspira Community Anti-Crime Program, "*Armonía*", is its emphasis upon, and the utilization of the youth indigenous to the target communities as the primary resource and moving force. The program is based upon the premise that the youth of these communities represent not only the largest pool of potential offenders, but the single most important and untapped resources for productive long-range social change.

The program is providing the youth of the Miami Community with an opportunity to interact with segments of the society (e.g., small store owners, senior citizens, school or law enforcement personnel), from which or towards which feelings of alienation, indifference or hostility have been exhibited in the past. Conversely, a similar opportunity is provided for groups representing these segments of the community.

Aspira's Community Anti-Crime Program focuses on the existing Aspira Club Federation concept and the process which supports it. In Florida, as in other areas where Aspira has been active for years, the Aspira clubs are meant to provide members with the proper means for a positive identity of the individual and his/her cultural heritage, leading to the recognition of needs and resources and to a personal commitment to the development of the individual member of the community.

The project foresees the involvement of at least 300 of the target

community's youth, and at least a similar number of the community's adult population in a series of self-planned and self-implemented activities focusing on crime prevention and community development.

Since the beginning of the "Armonía" Program in November 1981, Aspira of Florida has trained seven youths to be involved in action clubs in the Miami area; three at high school level, three at junior high school level, and one at the elementary school level. Through the clubs, a total of 276 young people have become actively involved in a series of organized community-oriented activities for the prevention of crime and the enhancement of their social, cultural and educational reality.

A new club is in the process of being organized which will bring together various youth serving agencies in the community and drop-out youths who have been referred by the Juvenile Court System and who are demonstrating a high risk incidence of juvenile crime behavior. The "Armonía" Program in conjunction with the City of Miami Police Department and the Youth and Family Development Agency is also developing an intensive summer program for youth towards the prevention of juvenile crime.

SCHOLARSHIPS

During the last year, Aspira of Florida was able to secure three doctoral scholarships which were granted to low-income Puerto Rican students in the fields of Clinical Psychology and General Psychology at the Caribbean Center for Graduate Studies in Miami, Florida.

Aspira of New York

The development of capable and committed Puerto Rican and Hispanic leadership is one of the chief functions of Aspira. In New York, home of the first of the Aspira family, all programs and services are being integrated into a restructured leadership program that will be the core of operations at Aspira of New York. The links of Aspira with target schools and community organizations will be focused upon this central mission of leadership development. The following is a report on the activities of the different Aspira programs in New York.

LEADERSHIP DEVELOPMENT PROGRAM

The principal goals of the leadership development program focuses upon Hispanic high school students. It seeks to provide academic, career

and pre-vocational counseling to all high school Aspira members. The message of Aspira goes beyond a mechanical job of placement in college. True leadership depends upon the creation in our youth of a commitment for change of our present socio-economic condition. These changes will be effected by a leadership that is aware and involved in the Hispanic community. Thus, Aspira of New York provides our youth with cultural enrichment and a strong sense of self-identity, focused upon the Hispanic and Puerto Rican heritage.

The objective is for each of the leadership development centers in the boroughs of the city where there is a substantial Hispanic and Puerto Rican population to provide leadership training to twenty youths from each of the target high schools. Moreover, each center will provide academic and career counseling to all Aspira club members. The club membership, motivated by their own leadership will organize a cultural enrichment program that will provide cultural activities to all club members.

YOUTH EMPLOYMENT AND TRAINING PROGRAM

The purpose of the Youth Employment and Training Program (YETP) is to bring students who dropped out of school back into the educational structure and to keep students who are potential dropouts from abandoning their education. The program uses training in vocational careers and remedial instruction and emphasizes importance of education in obtaining a successful career. The program has been implemented to run in two cycles from the Fall of 1980 to the Fall of 1981. Moreover, there have been two components to the program: the Out-of-School and the In-School. In total, 102 students participated in 1980-81.

The Out-of-School Component

This part of YETP had a two fold purpose:

1. to recruit high school dropouts with the purpose of giving them vocational training and
2. to counsel and encourage these students to pursue higher education.

All students were given instruction to prepare for the General Equivalency Diploma. Those who wished to pursue vocational studies received training in typing and accounting.

The In-School Component

This component was essentially concerned with keeping potential dropouts in the educational system, encouraging them to seek higher education and providing them with support services where necessary. As a

result of YETP, two-thirds (67.3 percent) of all participants received immediate benefits from the program, either in finding gainful employment and/or continuing their training and educational advancement.

THE MAYOR'S SCHOLARSHIP PROGRAM

Aspira administered the Mayor's Scholarship Program of New York City in order to provide supplementary financial assistance in the form of a grant to college students residing in certain community development districts. These awards range from \$100 to \$650 for an academic year and are given on the basis of the Basic Educational Opportunity Grant (BEOG) eligibility, full-time undergraduate enrollment at a degree-granting institution of higher education, and permanent residency in one of the designated community development districts.

The program informs community organizations and agencies of scholarship opportunities, trains community based organizations and their personnel in the area of undergraduate financial aid and provides personal, academic, career and financial aid counseling to program participants. Aspira of New York operated the program as a part of a consortium which includes the New York Urban League and the Admission Referral and Information Center. The three consortium members are in their fourth year of guaranteeing the fair and equitable distribution of the maximum possible number of scholarship grants in New York City.

There have been 1,500 applicants for this program of which 479 or 32 percent have been selected, at an average annual grant of \$488 per recipient. The total amount awarded totalled \$233,838 in 1980-81. The following table shows the ethnic distribution breakdown of the recipients.

TABLE I
ETHNIC DISTRIBUTION BREAKDOWN OF
MAYOR'S SCHOLARSHIP PROGRAM RECIPIENTS, 1980-81

ETHNIC GROUP	PERCENTAGE*
Black	48.0
Puerto Ricans	31.0
Other Hispanics	11.0
Asian	0.0
American Indian	0.0
White (Non-Hispanic)	1.0
Other Ethnic Origin	2.0
Not Specified	7.0
Total	100.0

*Rounded to the nearest percentage

THE SUMMER SAVE PROGRAM

A new program for Aspira of New York for the year 1980-81 was the Summer SAVE Program. Its stated purposes were four

- to help 100 participants gain more control of their lives;
- to show them the relationship between education and careers;
- to develop a job market for participants;
- to develop their potential for employment.

Through local community-based organizations such as Aspira of New York, SAVE provided an opportunity for economically disadvantaged youth to acquire vocational direction at an early age. Evidence from sociological research suggests that this is an extremely cost-effective, long-term strategy for addressing problems which typically affect this vulnerable population.

The program was structured in the following manner: Students spent ten hours per week in lectures and discussion groups, two hours per week in supervised laboratory experience and workshops, four hours per week at a worksite placement and four hours per week at a series of conferences delivered by guest speakers. Mass communications and health related careers proved to be the areas of greatest interest and preference, both in the public and private sectors for the Aspira participants.

The New York State Department of Labor was instrumental in launching the program. The program design was based on research findings which show that skills, competencies and behavior likely to make a person employable are usually acquired during adolescence and the early adult years. Disadvantaged youth, however, often live in environments where these skills may not be taught and where encouragement to develop positive attitudes about the world of work are lacking. As a result, many enter their adult years unprepared to compete for a place in the work force. The Department of Labor recognized these factors in implementing Project SAVE as an early intervention program emphasizing career planning and active vocational exploration. Project SAVE offers a preventive approach for two of the most serious problems facing economically disadvantaged youth in the U.S. today

- incomplete basic education,
- unemployment.

SAVE links high school youth with a job by targeting 14 and 15 year olds beginning high school and placing them in contact with real-life career role models in order to show them how important an education is to future employability and to give education an existential purpose.

The New York State Education Department recommended that eligible students receive academic credit for their participation in the pro-

gram. Moreover, a survey analysis of both students and parents was made at the end of the program to provide an evaluative perspective.

Aspira of New York was encouraged by the cooperation from different sectors of the community who made valuable contributions to the work of education. The Association of Minority Enterprises of New York provided assistance in locating community business. It also sponsored an awards dinner at the end of the summer.

Project SAVE mobilizes neighborhood centers, local churches, community support services, local planning councils, the private sector and distinguished minority group agencies such as Aspira to work together for a common goal. During the first year of Aspira's involvement with the project (1980), SAVE reached about 3,000 young people through 20 community-based organizations. Nearly 1,000 local businesses and community agencies provided participants with 468 speakers, 834 tours and 1,103 individual job-placement experiences. In 1981, the work was distributed through even more community sites and up to 27 community organizations were enlisted in the program. Aspira of New York was an important component in the forging of these new alliances of education and the marketplace. /



Aspira of New Jersey

Established in 1968 as a community-based, self-help agency, as its other sister agencies in the Aspira family, Aspira of New Jersey works to break the grim cycle of poverty, inadequate schooling and sense of helplessness for Puerto Rican and other Hispanic youths. This agency serves teenagers and young adults from low-income families in Essex, Passaic and Hudson Counties. Clients are mainly Puerto Rican in origin but also include other Hispanics as well as white and black teenagers in need of Aspira's services. Since 1968, Aspira of New Jersey has helped over 8,000 Puerto Rican and Hispanic youngsters in junior and senior high schools by providing special counseling and college placement assistance. In 1981, Aspira of New Jersey worked with 1,331 young people and helped 241 gain admission to colleges, medical, graduate and technical schools.

ESSEX COUNTY (NEWARK, NEW JERSEY)

Housing Aspira's New Jersey administrative offices, as well as providing a range of services, the Essex County Center in downtown Newark is the nerve center for the Aspira clubs throughout the county as far south as New Brunswick. In the leadership development clubs at four high schools in Newark, students learned organizational skills and procedures and developed values which favor education, responsibility, commitment and involvement in social issues. The aid of Aspira counselors in college and career orientation included tours and interviews at New Jersey institutions such as William Paterson State College, Rutgers and Drew Universities.

During the year 1981, Aspira of New Jersey expanded its counseling placement services to focus on non-traditional careers for women in business. A special Advisory Council of people in business, government and education was created to help implement recommendations from extensive surveys from Hispanic high school girls in Newark and Paterson. This Advisory Council will form an integral part of the new Business Careers Program funded by the Geraldine R. Dodge Foundation and the Florence and John Schumann Foundation. This program will facilitate the entry of Hispanics into engineering, accounting, computer science, economics, marketing and management. Through internship experiences, skills workshops and review courses for business graduate school entrance exams, Aspira will help high school and college students to obtain and be successful at their jobs in the marketplace.

Through a joint program with FOCUS and the Essex County Community College, Aspira recruited 18 students to enter the College's

Associate Degree Program in Human Services for the Disabled Each student accepted to the College's two year Associate of Arts program has the opportunity to work towards certificates as counselors for the disabled.

An early intervention program was begun with a grant from the Turrell Fund After identifying 26 students at a junior high school in Newark who were in danger of dropping out of the educational system, Aspira counselors initiated an intensive series of interviews and visits with the students and their families In sharp contrast to the projections that at least half of these students would have abandoned the school system, 24 of the 26 counseled by Aspira graduated and went on to high school

HUDSON COUNTY (JERSEY CITY)

Located in Jersey City, the Hudson County Center serves youth from the heavily Puerto Rican populations of Jersey City and Hoboken through four high school and six neighborhood center Aspira clubs. All activities were designed to develop academic and leadership skills, promote community involvement and—because of the nature of the funding from the Federal Law Enforcement Agency (LEAA)—to actively discourage juvenile delinquency

As explained above, the Peer Helpers program funded by LEAA was based on identifying student volunteers who were successful and active in school and then pairing them with a peer who had academic, social or personal problems and needed a support system to stay in school The 33 peer helpers in Hudson County were trained in listening, problem-solving, and goal setting skills to prepare them for counseling students on a one-to-one basis. In training these young people it was discovered that they themselves were in need of counseling and this service was extended to them.

At a number of Hudson County's high schools and neighborhood centers, the Leadership Development Club Program offered academic and career counseling, recreational activities, theatre, dance and sports clubs, tutoring, and career guidance Informal meetings with Hispanic seventh and eighth graders at the junior high schools and on the street took place The purpose of these contacts was to make these youngsters aware of the Aspira clubs and to get them involved in organized summer activities prior to their entering high school.

Among the activities which the Hudson County Center conducted were: The Hispanic Summer Olympics; Puerto Rican Heritage Month; the presentation of plays; a toy drive for children at the Jersey City Medical Center; a financial aid workshop; career opportunities presentation by the Taylor Business Institute; a college application and resume

writing workshop; an SAT review course; a career day conference, a bilingual education conference, Affirmative Action Week; Awards Night; and a Channel 41 program highlighting the internship program described below.

The Health Careers component involved the following activities. a presentation by Christ Hospital on careers in Nursing; a National Puerto Rican Forum presentation on the concerns of Hispanic Health Professionals; an American Cancer Society presentation on the dangers of smoking; a Health Fair at Seton Hall University, a Health Careers Conference; and a workshop on understanding the disabled Hispanic.

Thirty-one Aspirantes from Hudson County participated from April to June in an internship program funded by the New Jersey Department of Community Affairs. Students worked at job sites from Monday to Thursday, acquiring skills in carpentry, clerical work, library science and interpersonal dynamics. On Fridays they attended workshops at the Aspira Hudson County Center. The program also included counseling sessions and such cultural activities as painting, sculpture, theater, dance and photography. The topics addressed in the Friday workshops included Puerto Rican history and culture, career awareness and leadership development.

PASSAIC COUNTY

Although Aspira was forced to close its Passaic County Center last year because it lost Federal Talent Search funding, Aspira maintained a presence in Paterson and Passaic. Through money from the Public Health Service, a health careers counselor working from the Passaic County Community College was able to maintain contact with students at this institution and three regional high schools. Activities offered to these students included workshops in financial aid and in college entrance interviews as well as career conferences.

Federal guidelines for Talent Search funding have not yet been determined, but Aspira will continue to seek government and private funding to reopen the center to serve Paterson and Passaic high school population of Hispanic origin. ✓

Aspira de Puerto Rico

Since 1970, Aspira de Puerto Rico has been servicing disadvantaged youths, inspired by a philosophy of educational service and leadership development. Under this philosophy, Aspira provides educational ad-



vancement, personal and leadership development and cultural identity to Puerto Rican youngsters with the necessary potential to effect positive change in themselves and in their poverty-stricken communities. During this time, over 12,000 students have benefited from Aspira de Puerto Rico's services.

Puerto Rican youngsters are in great need of support services leading to their continued access and retention in academic institutions. Seventy out of every hundred students entering primary school in Puerto Rico do not achieve a high school diploma. Of these thirty high school graduates, only fourteen enroll in a college or university. Of those enrolled, only eight received college degrees. This situation fully justifies Aspira's existence and purpose.

Grants and financial assistance have facilitated low-income students' access to higher education in Puerto Rico. Recent research indicates that the great majority of these low-income students have enrolled in private and more expensive institutions of higher education. Aspira is instrumental in facilitating students' choices among a wide spectrum of academic and institutional possibilities. Aspira's knowledge and experience guarantees that the students will be well informed about the careers, institutions and financial aid available. This information significantly increases the participants' opportunities of successfully completing their programs and achieving their career goals.

Aspira de Puerto Rico has enjoyed a fruitful year, despite cuts in

funding resulting from the national economic situation. The success achieved by our students solidifies our commitment towards better educational opportunities for Puerto Rican youth.

EDUCATIONAL COUNSELING/TALENT SEARCH

The program's primary objective is the development of the participant's educational and career goals through advice and orientation on vocational as well as academic opportunities. Counselors facilitate student compliance with admission requirements, deadlines and examinations. Assistance in obtaining recommendation letters, preparing forms and procuring scholarships and financial aid information is also provided.

The program concentrates in high school students, but services also include dropouts. These services are geared to helping them adjust to high school or take high school equivalency tests. During the past year, students were involved in the process of motivation, human growth, counseling and goal setting. Also, students were provided academic orientation and vocational counseling. A total of 1,683 students received services from the program.

Guidance is provided to identify the university, college or vocational school most suitable to the student's needs. The counseling program also conducts several professional and vocational training activities, including among them the following:

- Tutoring and camps in preparation for the College Board examinations;
- Seminars to improve study habits,
- Camps to prepare students for post high-school life;
- Counseling and tutoring for high school dropouts.

An Occupational Fair, organized by the Counseling/Talent Search Program with the assistance of other Aspira programs, marked the highlight of the program's yearly activities. As well as presenting a number of displays, information related with admission requirements, duration of training, types of courses offered and the different licenses, certificates and degrees available from each institution was made available to participants. Demonstrations, films and other audiovisual materials were used to complement the displays. Although the fair was originally designed for students attending schools within Aspira's immediate geographical area, it was attended by students from schools throughout the island.

UPWARD BOUND PROGRAM FOR VETERANS

This program prepares veterans for the high school equivalency tests and for post-secondary school admission. Its three components, basic

skills development, remedial courses and counseling constitute the main core of the program's services. During the past year 150 veterans benefited from these services.

In order to strengthen the student's academic potential, basic skills improvement and remedial courses in the academic areas of Natural Sciences, Mathematics, Spanish, English and Social Studies are offered. These services are complemented by support services leading to the fulfillment of the student's academic potential.

Aspira's guidance and counseling services are directed towards the improvement of the participant's performance in the College Board and high school equivalency examinations. Other services, including the course "Preparation for Postsecondary Education," provide the student with useful information on the academic and personal challenges inherent in a college education.

The program identifies the participants' needs, providing them with guidance and information on sources of financial aid available. Other services include a vocational component and placement training evaluation. All the program participants who took the high school equivalency examination passed the test. This indicates to us that the program is effective.

Last year, the Upward Bound Veterans Program transacted 280 admissions and 143 financial aid requests, as well as placed 55 students in postsecondary institutions.

SPECIAL SERVICES PROGRAM

The program's main purpose is to assist low income students and/or physical handicapped persons to fully develop their academic and personal potentials. Based at the Carolina Regional College campus, the program is geared towards student retention and the successful completion of their college programs.

Counselors aim to help the students define their personal and vocational goals through self-awareness and understanding. The process includes the active participation of college counselors and professors in addition to Aspira's personnel.

During the last year, 232 students were served by the Special Services Program. Tutorial services, remedial courses and seminars in the academic areas of Mathematics, English and Spanish, were offered to these students. Since students often participated in more than one course or service, enrollment climbed to 637.

Interviews, psychological and academic testing, evaluation and referrals were provided and meetings and exchanges with academic and

administrative staff members of the Carolina Regional College were likewise organized.

Other activities involved the participation of 125 students in an encounter designed to provide group dynamic experiences for the development of self-confidence and reliance, and a seminar dealing with basic concepts in goal definition. These activities encouraged students recognition of short and long-range goals and of the relationship between them. They also provided the students with opportunities available for a plan of action leading to the implementation of decisions necessary to achieve a particular goal.

HEALTH CAREERS PROGRAM/HIGH SCHOOL AND COLLEGE

The Health Careers Program in Aspira de Puerto Rico is being implemented both at the High School and College levels. It provides information on health-related career alternatives and creates awareness among its participants on the need to serve their communities in a health career capacity. The program's efforts are concentrated in health professions requiring advanced study, such as medicine, odontology, optometry, veterinary and graduate degrees in other related areas. In addition, a considerable number of students express interest in careers such as nursing, physical and occupational therapy and others.

In the past year, 193 students, primarily from high school, participated in the program. Other participants included undergraduate students, high school and college dropouts.

At the high school level, counseling and orientation, both individually and in groups, constitute the backbone of the program's services. Health career alternatives in Puerto Rico and the United States are covered. Additional information regarding admission and technical aspects of each health-related field assists the student in identifying the best academic option to suit his or her interests and potential.

Through the use of film discussions and visits to medical centers, the program aims to create a professional attitude towards their potential career. Emphasis is given to the importance of observation, scientific investigation and motivation.

During the past year, the program offered a six week course in preparation for the College Board Entrance Examination which was attended by 125 students. A Health Careers Club organized by the participants is directed to help the students in their personal development through the use of investigation, group dynamics, techniques in planning and decision-making.

At the College level, the program concentrates in students already interested in health careers and introduces them to different academic

institutions offering medical career programs, to their admission requirements and process and to the available opportunities for financial aid. Students with limited financial resources are prepared to compete adequately with those from more privileged backgrounds. One hundred and fourteen students attended the activities organized during the past year. Of the 29 students applying for admission, 15 were accepted in medical schools and two in schools of odontology.

As in other sites where the program operates, the program in Aspira de Puerto Rico includes training for the Medical College Admission Test, assistance in writing essays and preparation for admission interviews. The Health Opportunity program goes beyond training and orientation, emphasizing the social service nature of a health career, especially within the island's system. It encourages the future health professional to offer his/her services in those areas of greatest needs. The students often serve as tutors for their peers, strengthening their common purpose.

Training, counseling and orientation are coupled with periods of clinical experience and internships in emergency and delivery rooms, in pathology labs and medical centers. The summer program enhances the participant's opportunity of being accepted in prestigious medical schools. Last year two participants attended similar seminars at Harvard Medical School, and two attended seminars at New York Medical College and Cornell Medical School. ✍



Aspira of Illinois

Aspira of Illinois has successfully completed another year of service. Aspira's efforts are aimed to offer Puerto Rican and Hispanic youths and the community-at-large a network of services designed to foster educational aspirations, awareness, knowledge and commitment to the solution of the problems in the Hispanic community. More specifically, its program are implemented in order to motivate students towards completing high school, and postsecondary and professional education, to develop leadership qualities which enable them to take a more active and positive role within the educational system and the community, and to create a support system to turn youth away from the social inferiority often assigned them in the urban United States.

A study by Northwestern University's Center for Urban Affairs ranks Aspira near the top among over one hundred and twenty-five organizations in terms of effectiveness and community prestige. Aspira is very proud of its successful track record of twelve years.

LEADERSHIP DEVELOPMENT

During the 1980-81 school year, Aspira maintained its program of motivation in twelve Chicago high schools. This past year, the total membership of Aspira clubs was 530 throughout the city. The Aspira Clubs Federation (ACF), a representative body of all Aspira Clubs held a Leadership Training Institute attended by 40 leaders from Aspira of Illinois clubs. Other AFC activities included participation in a Bilingual Education support rally at the Chicago Civic Center Plaza and a Junior Executive Day. Aspira strives to instill in our young students a conviction that their development is meant to benefit their Puerto Rican and Hispanic peoples and that their knowledge will become the means of social change. Articulate, committed young leadership is a sure way to improve the Hispanic image in society and the status of the people.

EDUCATIONAL OPPORTUNITY PROGRAM

The goal of this program is to increase the number of Hispanic students in colleges and universities. Through workshops and individualized sessions, field trips to different colleges and occupational settings, and distribution of educational and career information, the counselors assist the Aspirantes in formulating and implementing realistic educational and career goals.

The program identifies and recruits eligible, low income, educationally disadvantaged high school students and assists them while still in high school to develop study skills and to pursue an appropriate college preparatory curriculum. Likewise, it provides adequate counseling, guidance and placement services so that after high school they may successfully pursue a formal post-secondary education. Beyond service, the program staff gets involved in educational advocacy, developing sensitivity among school officials, parents and others regarding the educational rights and needs of the students.

This year Aspira of Illinois counselors provided direct services to students in 13 Chicago high schools, where they were assigned to work one or two days a week. Over 2,000 students received services. Of these 724 were placed in college and helped to obtain financial aid. About 20 financial aid and career workshops were held and attended by more than 600 students. The program has another facet which encourages secondary and college dropouts with demonstrated aptitude to re-enter educational programs leading either to high school diploma, a general equivalency diploma or college level degree. Five field trips to universities (Northern Illinois, Loyola of Chicago, University of Illinois-Champaign, Northeastern and University of Iowa) were attended by over 300 students.

Other components of the Aspira of Illinois Educational Opportunity Program are outlined below.

HEALTH CAREERS. Five Aspira Health Careers Clubs were organized in Illinois, four of them in colleges, with a total membership of 100 students. Aspira provided a review course on the Medical Careers Admission Test which was attended by 25 students. Through Aspira of Illinois 46 students applied for university summer health programs and 9 were accepted.

VOCATIONAL CAREERS. This component allows students who are not interested in pursuing a formal college education to enter short-term skills programs in a specialized area. There were 213 students enrolled in these programs and approximately 75 found placement in vocational projects.

SUMMER PROGRAM. During the summer of 1980, 150 high students participated in a full-time nine week program with academic and work experience components. Besides intense course work in academic subjects, the participants found work assignments in hospitals, community organizations, child-care centers and media workshops. The program is accredited by the Chicago Public School System.

TUTORIAL SERVICES. In order to assist students interested in law careers, a Law School Admissions Test tutorial and review course was offered at the Aspira of Illinois Center, and was attended by eight stu-

dents. An American College Test tutorial was also offered, which serviced 15 students. A group of Aspirantes tutored 45 elementary and junior high school students.

SCHOLARSHIPS: College-bound Aspirantes received 24 scholarships, ranging from \$100 to \$400 dollars. These Aspira Scholarships although limited in dollar amounts, reward academic excellence and provide supplements to other financial aid from government sources.

YOUTH EMPLOYMENT AND TRAINING: This Ceta-funded program allowed 46 students to participate in an after-school program with a twelve hour weekly work experience in Health Careers, Media, Community Service and Clerical areas. The objectives were to develop marketable skills, utilize on-the-job training and to motivate the participants to continue their education.

Aspira of Illinois had demonstrated its ability to survive and expand as a social service and educational organization under increasingly difficult constraints. Much of the success depends upon the dedication of those committed to its work whether as staff or at a volunteer basis, particularly the teacher-sponsors in the high school clubs. Most of the young Hispanic leaders in Chicago today have been through the Aspira process in one way or another. They are solid evidence of the effectiveness of Aspira's programs. ✓



Aspira of Pennsylvania

During the past year Aspira of Pennsylvania's efforts continued to be aimed to offering students a network of services designed to foster aspiration, self-confidence, the desire and the ability to achieve a higher education and a commitment to the community. Aspira's programs continued to develop effective means of diverse educational learning experiences for the Puerto Rican and other disadvantaged youths in our communities. This was accomplished by making available to this population more career opportunities and choices as well as developing their talents, skills, leadership abilities and cultural awareness.

These major accomplishments are exemplified by the success of such programs as the Leadership Youth Institute, as well as in the Counseling and Research Components. At Aspira of Pennsylvania during this year about 2,100 students have received services. The following table provides a general profile of our caseload for this period.

YOUTH RECEIVING SERVICES FROM ASPIRA, INC. OF PENNSYLVANIA
BY SEX, ETHNIC BACKGROUND, FAMILY INCOME
AND YOUTH'S EDUCATIONAL LEVEL, 1980-1981

SEX	Male	38.0
	Female	62.0
ETHNIC BACKGROUND	Island-born Puerto Ricans	27.0
	Mainland-born Puerto Ricans	56.0
	Others (non Puerto Rican Hispanics, white, black, and Asians)	17.0
FAMILY INCOME	Public Assistance	62.0
	\$6,000-\$8,499	24.0
	\$9,000-or more	14.0
EDUCATIONAL LEVEL	High School	62.0
	Post High School (College/Vocational)	22.0
	Professional School	2.6
	Other	13.4

COUNSELING COMPONENT

Aspira of Pennsylvania's Counseling Component is designed to meet the needs of economically and educationally disadvantaged youth who have not been given adequate guidance and orientation for pursuing an academic education beyond high school. To remedy this situation the Counseling Component provides for the students a series of career and financial aid workshops, educational film series, conferences, college field

trips and a variety of other activities orienting youth on educational and financial aid opportunities.

Through the assistance and guidance of the Counseling Component over \$500,000 in financial aid was secured and made available to the Aspirantes. This financial assistance came in the way of State Scholarships, Basic Educational Opportunity Grants, City Scholarships, Mayor Scholarships, Union Scholarships, private grants and scholarships, loans and College Work Study Programs.

In November 1981, along with the Philadelphia Electric Company and the Westinghouse Electric Company, Aspira cosponsored the Annual Hispanic Career Conference. Held at the Temple University Student Activity Center, the purpose of this conference was to provide junior high school students the opportunity to explore a variety of careers and to have first hand contact with Hispanics in the field of their interest. Approximately 40 Hispanic professionals volunteered their time to provide information on their careers and to be role models to the 200 junior high school students attending the all-day activity.

Also through the effort of Aspira of Pennsylvania's Counseling Component, 300 students from Philadelphia and New Jersey were able to go on a college exploration trip to Trenton State College. This and other college exploration trips provided an opportunity to visit a total of 10 colleges. Aspira of Pennsylvania also participated at an Annual Youth Services Fair and the Tenth Annual College Conference where a total of 54 institutional programs were represented and opportunities for financial aid was discussed with the participants. Other activities included sponsoring the Annual Allied Health Profession Conference and a MCAT study Review Course as well as participating in the Temple's Law Day Conference on "Latinos and the Law," sponsored by the Puerto Rican Action Law Organization of that institution.

A very important activity of the 1980-81 year sponsored by the Counseling Component was the series of workshops entitled "College Choice," the purpose of which was to provide the Aspirantes the opportunity to explore alternatives in making a decision on the colleges of their choice. Of the 900 students serviced by the Counseling Component during the year, 400 were placed in colleges, vocational, technical and professional schools throughout the country. California State College, the College of Textiles and Sciences, Glassboro State College, Harvard Radcliffe University, Long Island University, the New School for Social Research, Pace University, Philadelphia Technical Institute, Princeton University, Rutgers University, Syracuse University, as well as the Universities of Southern California, Delaware, Villanova, Yale and West Virginia State, were among the institutions receiving Aspirantes and students placed by the Counseling Component of Aspira of Pennsylvania.

Presently, Aspira of Pennsylvania through its Counseling Component is considered to be the state leader in the placement of Puerto Ricans into medical and dental colleges, law and graduate schools. During the past four years it has placed 23 students in such schools as Temple, Harvard, Cornell and Ohio Medical Schools, as well as Temple Dental School, Pennsylvania College of Optometry and others

YOUTH LEADERSHIP INSTITUTE

The Aspira Youth Leadership Institute of Pennsylvania is one of the most important aspects of this organization. It has allowed for students' participation and interaction especially within the Aspira Clubs. Through the Aspira Clubs, students are provided the environment in which they can join in groups to understand, examine and act together with others in organized and concerted efforts to improve their own lives, their schools and their communities.

Throughout the year the 11 Aspira Clubs in Pennsylvania have undertaken numerous activities which have promoted and instilled a sense of pride and dignity among the Puerto Rican youth of this area. From the celebration of such cultural and traditional events as Three-Kings Day to that of the Annual Leadership Conference and Convention, the activities held were of importance to the club members, as well as to their families, their school and the community at large. The leadership program's efforts continued developing effective means of diverse educational learning experiences, leadership, organizational skills and cultural oriented activities.

THE RESEARCH PROJECT COMPONENT

Since its inception Aspira has shown great interest in the areas of research and policy making. In 1980 the National Institute of Juvenile Justice and Delinquency Prevention of the Law Enforcement Assistance Administration, at Washington, D.C., granted Aspira of Pennsylvania funds to conduct a three-year longitudinal study on Puerto Rican high school drop-outs. The first year of the study has been completed.

For this study a specialized approach for sample recruitment among hard-to-reach members of a minority — Puerto Rican — population in Philadelphia was developed. The timing, the utilization of a combination of methods and their adaptation to the specific culture from which the subject for the study were drawn, were instrumental in reaching a large sample. Furthermore, access to the community was facilitated by conducting the study from an established Puerto Rican institution, that is, Aspira of Pennsylvania.

For this study a total of 505 Puerto Rican 10th grade youngsters and 505 parents or legal guardians constituted the final sample. A subset of 89 parochial school youngsters were also included. This brief summary of some of the findings, however, deals with the aforementioned sample of 505. Sources for the data are a Parent and a Youth Questionnaire administered in person by trained bilingual interviewers. The results established differences within a low income sample. The majority of the families — 71 percent of the stay-in families and 83 percent of the dropouts families — had an annual income below the poverty level.

Considerable diversity in types of parental arrangement was found among both groups. However, significant differences emerged between families of stay-ins and families of dropouts when these parental arrangements and rituals of family organizations were compared.

Simple measures of school performance — based on suspension, patterns of absences and repetition of grades — proved to be highly discriminating. The study also revealed differences between stay-ins' and dropouts' perceptions of the school, and indicated that the 7th and 10th grades represent high risk zones for youngsters who are likely to drop out. Reasons given for dropping out and patterns of support experiences in the school were also examined.

Peer influences were explored by looking at the youngsters' association with non-delinquents, delinquents and dropouts. Implications for direct and indirect early intervention at school and family levels are also addressed. Increase or decrease delinquent and non-delinquent activities among dropouts and stay-ins will be analyzed in the two remaining follow-up years of the study.

A second study sponsored by the Tinker Foundation and Commissioned by Aspira of America was conducted by the Aspira Research Project of Aspira of Pennsylvania. The study was designed by Aspira of America, Inc. as a pilot to be implemented in one Aspira associate in order to find out what has happened to former Aspirantes and how they view the impact that Aspira has had in their lives. It was felt that the results from this study would suggest what directions to take in a National Survey of Aspirantes, a large-scale survey of Aspira participants during its 21 years of existence. Aspira recognizes the need to systematically collect and interpret data leading to a better understanding of its functions.

The questionnaire for this study was developed to reflect the different functions of the Aspira Process as well as standard demographic data, language usage, educational attainment, employment status, and ethnic identity. A pre-test of the questionnaire was conducted by the Research Project staff with present Aspirantes to ensure appropriate flow of questions and full understanding by the respondents. As a result the questionnaire was streamlined and questions with ambiguous meaning

were modified. Letters to all participants in the Aspira programs in Pennsylvania were followed by a publicity campaign involving fliers, newspaper articles and announcements in T.V. and radio stations. A second recruitment strategy was implemented by instructing the interviewers to ask respondents after finishing their interview for names and ways of contacting others who had participated in Aspira and who would be interested in taking part in the study. A total of 186 cases were recruited of which 94 resulted in completed interviews.

Aspirantes from 1969 to 1981 generally support the essential directions of the Aspira program. They suggest the program works because it is built on respect for the youngsters, their peer associations and experience and their need to be proud of their competence, ethnic background and the skills required to deal effectively with school demands.

Some respondents' criticism suggest that programs improve in the direction of even more emphasis on responsible leadership, with a new thrust on inter-ethnic reaching out, and on systematic involvement of adults in the family. As young adults themselves, the overwhelming majority of respondents would be willing to participate in Aspira's efforts at the present time. The suggested new directions represent a wish to improve society, while enhancing their own ethnic group. They imply idealism, and readiness for constructive efforts. Through these efforts, the respondents hope to breach the gap between the first and second generation as well as between ethnic groups. Their responses also suggest that Aspira stretch its programatic and preventive concerns into the large population of youngsters that are bound for the trades rather than college. Nowhere is it suggested that Aspira deemphasize its conventional work in providing linkage between junior high school, high school and institutions of higher learning. Many respondents simply want more of Aspira's traditional intervention while pointing to new areas of emphasis. ✎

A Look to the Future

RESEARCH AND EVALUATION INSTITUTE

As a result of Aspira's research and investigation, concrete recommendations have emerged to improve its agencies and programs in the future. The pilot project on the impact of Aspira upon the lives of participants in the Aspira Process is deemed an important step in terms of the development of a systematic means of assessing its effectiveness in order to insure relevancy to its programs. According to these recommen-

dations, in the face of Federal budget cuts, it becomes more important than ever to develop programs that are based on solid data. This would call for the establishment of a Research and Evaluation Institute whose functions would be twofold:

1. the periodic evaluation of Aspira's programs, and
2. the systematic research of social/educational issues affecting Hispanic minorities.

While different research ventures have been aimed at these functions at various times by Aspira, there remains the need for ongoing, cohesive, research activities to become an integral part of Aspira.

The periodic evaluation of Aspira's programs should include a National Survey of Aspirantes, to be performed every few years, as well as the assessment of specific programs throughout its associates network. Utilization of research as a management tool will enhance Aspira's program effectiveness and funding possibilities. A computerized national list of Aspirantes would be an immediate need for the National Survey.

Research of social/educational issues affecting Hispanic minorities should be a high priority, given the fact that Hispanics will constitute the largest minority in the United States less than twenty years from now. Aspira's leadership role in the Hispanic community will be enhanced by the systematic study of pressing social/educational problems and the subsequent thoughtful planning of programs to address these problems.

ARAWAK ENTERPRISES

Aspira has always been conscious of the need for finding creative and innovative ways of generating resources to support its many efforts. With this in mind, it has initiated the process of establishing and incorporating under the name of Arawak Enterprises, Inc., a separate entity whose function will be the procurement and marketing of a variety of goods from Far and Mid-Eastern countries. Arawak Enterprises' sole purpose has been defined as that of complementing Aspira's fund raising efforts by its own money-making activities, and in this way, to support Aspira's task on behalf of the leadership and educational needs of young Puerto Ricans, Hispanics and members of other minorities during a time of economic uncertainties. ✓

Letters to Aspira

The following are excerpts taken from letters received at our various Aspira offices during this fiscal year and immediately preceding it.

These letters come to us from leaders in different walks of life in

education, government, community organizations, etc —as well as from our Aspirantes. They represent but a small sample of the correspondence received supporting our work or asking for our guidance and assistance

This section of our *Annual Report 1980-1981* is offered to further provide for our readers a basis upon which to judge the role that we play in the education of our young people, the quality of our work and the need to continue offering and expanding our services.

NEED FOR A NEW ASPIRA OFFICE

It is my understanding that a letter [has been sent to you] requesting the opening of an ASPIRA office in the Miami area. May I add my name to those in the Steering Committee and to the many others who have written you in full support of this request . . .

While it is true that there are many worthwhile Puerto Rican programs in our midst, . . . and while it is also true that I as a Puerto Rican have been selected to office in Miami and concern myself with our community, nevertheless there are many, many unfulfilled needs.

. . . The specific dimensions and qualities of ASPIRA fit very well the void that presently exists and if this community were to be successful in opening an ASPIRA office in Miami, I would pledge the full cooperation of my office and of the City of Miami to this endeavor. The request to open an ASPIRA office in Miami has my full support.

—Maurice A. Ferré
Mayor
City of Miami, Florida

Not only do I strongly endorse an interest in having a local unit of Aspira America located in Miami but also feel that it will be invaluable for the school system as well as the other social service agencies in the City of Miami serving these same youth.

—J. L. Jones
Superintendent of Schools
Dade County Public Schools
Miami, Florida

GRATITUDE AND RECOGNITION FROM STUDENTS, ASPIRANTES AND PROFESSIONAL LEADERS

Speaking on behalf of L.A.S.O. Health Professions Group, I would like to thank you for the help and support you have given us, as individuals and as a group, throughout the semester.

. Your help has been over and above what is expected and we appreciate it very much.

—Edwin Colón
Chairperson
Latin American Student Organization
Loyola University

I have been an Aspirante since 1978, and I am more than ever glad that I have joined ASPIRA. The club has given me so much confidence and determination to become a minority doctor; if it weren't for ASPIRA and fellow minority students, I would've dropped out from pre-med long ago because of discouragement.

I would like to share this with other minority students on campus . . . (and) . . . would appreciate it greatly if you can inform me on any ASPIRA activities I would like to start recruiting minority students into ASPIRA for guidance with their undergraduate pre-medical studies.

—Cindy S. Wang
Secretary/League of Unified-Cooperative
Hispanic Americans
Member/Black Science Students Organization-
New York University

I will avail myself of your invitation to seek whenever necessary the valuable assistance of ASPIRA. Lest there be any doubts, allow me to make it perfectly clear that without the assistance of ASPIRA my job will be exceedingly difficult, particularly with respect to the recruitment and retention of those citizens of Hispanic origin whom you represent.

—F.M. Lapeyrolerie, D.D.S., F.A.C.D.
Dean, College of Medicine and Dentistry of N.J.
New Jersey Dental School

Over the past several years, the relationship between your agency and this office has been a fruitful and productive one. Your participation in our recruitment efforts through the referral of students, particularly of Hispanic background has been extremely helpful in bringing to our attention non-traditional students with a high potential for success in this program and in health professional school.

.

I look forward to increasing cooperation between our two offices in providing a continuity of service, support, enrichment, and direction for these fine and deserving students

—Jesse Wardlow
Project Director
Health Professions Program
Harvard University

This is to congratulate you . for the excellent conference you organized at the Dental School. .

It was the first time in many years that I saw a conference on Health Care for Minorities at which the Latino minority was included in anything beyond the token speaker and two or three students. You were successful in both the students coming to this conference as well as in assembling a full panel of Latino or Hispano professionals to participate.

—Jorge Prieto, M.D.
Chairman
Department of Family Practice
Cooke Country Hospital
Chicago, Illinois

Opportunities within the Health Care Field are numerous. Yet, for the disadvantaged youth in our society, those opportunities are cloaked in an aura of misdirection, misunderstanding, ignorance, and racial inequity.

[ASPIRA's] Health Careers Program has manifested a long standing commitment towards the disadvantaged youths pursuing careers in the health services area. Your program has been instrumental in placing hundreds of Puerto Ricans, other Hispanics, and other disadvantaged youths into pre-medical, technical, nursing and related health area programs.

I now take this opportunity to salute your achievements, and extend you my support in the hope, and expectation that programs like yours will always be at the forefront of social progress.

—José M. Fernández
Executive Director
Health and Hospitals Corporation
Medical and Health Center
Brooklyn, New York

COMMITMENT FOR COLLABORATION AND MORAL SUPPORT

The Pre Health Profession Program of Fordham University's School of General Studies is very happy to support Aspira's National Health Careers Program. We share a mutual goal, that is of increasing the number of minority health professionals who would serve in underserved areas. We would be most pleased to plan and implement with you joint activities that would enhance student learning; that would make the greatest use of educational resources, and that would enhance the admission possibilities and placement of minority students in health professions schools.

.....

We look forward, with enthusiasm and pleasure to working closely in these efforts

—Clara E. Rodríguez
Dean
Fordham University
School of General Studies
Bronx, New York

The Pennsylvania College of Podiatric Medicine wholeheartedly endorses your efforts to introduce students to the health professions. You are to be congratulated for your innovative approach in motivating students to pursue a career in the health professions. . . .

We are more than happy to have hosted the third annual ASPIRA conference at our college on May 10, 1980. We invite your students to visit the college and our outpatient clinic at any time.

—LeGrand Newman
Director Recruitment
Pennsylvania College of Podiatric Medicine

During the last five years Puerto Rico Junior College has accepted a significant number of students from the Health Careers Program of ASPIRA de Puerto Rico. . . . We are pleased with the work done by the Health Careers Program of ASPIRA with these students, by having motivated them to continue studies in the health area.

We are always willing to collaborate with ASPIRA as much as we can as we are fully aware of the importance of ASPIRA's contribution to the university community

—Domingo E. Marrerro
Chancellor
Puerto Rico Junior College
Río Piedras, Puerto Rico

POLICYMAKING, RESEARCH AND PUBLICATIONS

It was a great pleasure to be able to participate in your June 3, 1980 seminar [at the ASPIRA Center for Educational Equity] as a discussant and to exchange views on the role of Hispanics in policymaking. I look forward to continued involvement with your Center, and congratulate you on the success of this year's program

—Baltasar Corrada, M.C.
Resident Commissioner, Puerto Rico

Thank you for forwarding to this division the first four numbers of your publication *Metas*. I am quite interested in the publication and look forward to future issues of it.

—John R. Hebert
Assistant Chief
Library of Congress

You and your organization are to be congratulated for the quality of your work and your fine accomplishments. I know the work that goes into putting together the fine publication you forwarded. It truly reflects the high standards you maintain

Keep up the great work. I, as a Puerto Rican, am very proud of your efforts and successes

—Carmen A. Pérez
Chief
Bureau of Bilingual Education

FINANCIAL SUPPORT

Your letter was very welcome, and very informative. The many programs you described—and the results obtained to date—confirmed our decision to increase the monies to be sent to your organization in 1981 to enable you to continue to provide assistance to the Puerto Rican youngsters seeking your help. Keep up the good work!

—Richard M. Arnold
Regional Director-Public Affairs
Union Carbide Corporation
Middle Atlantic States

This marks a 50 per cent increase in our contribution over the past few years and comes about as a result partially from admiration for the fine work you are doing to serve Hispanic young people . . .

My best wishes to you . . . in your continuing challenge to manage and lead this organization which is so important to America today.

—William P. Epke
Director-Corporate Support Programs
The Equitable Life Assurance Society of the U.S.
New York City

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☐ *The Land-Grant Analogy: Possible Applications to the Urban University of the Future.* Speech presented to a National Conference at Northeastern Illinois University by Mario A. Anglada, National Executive Director, Aspira of America, May 15-16, 1978, 12 pp. \$1.

☐ *Cutting Edge.* Quarterly newsletter published by the Aspira Center for Educational Equity, Washington, D.C. Free of charge.

☐ Annual Report, Aspira of America, Inc. Free of charge.

☐ *Metas*, Aspira of America's journal, published three times yearly, containing research on education and related social issues as these affect Puerto Ricans and other Hispanics. Subscriptions are:

- ☐ 1 year, individual (3 issues), \$10.00
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"El Legado: A Puerto Rican Legacy"

Puerto Ricans were living on the United States more than 140 years ago, when Puerto Rico was still a part of the Spanish Empire. A dozen years after the United States took over Puerto Rico in 1898, the Bureau of the Census noted 1,513 Puerto Ricans in the United States. By 1910 there were approximately 70,000 Puerto Ricans living in the United States mainland; ten years later this number had more than quadrupled and in the following decade it tripled again. The Puerto Rican population based in the United States today numbers nearly 2 million and is rapidly increasing.

Residing in the New York City area today are 1.5 million Puerto Ricans who came to this country at the turn of the century. It was these who established the community infrastructure for the flood of Puerto Rican migrants to New York City following World War II and who scattered the seeds and laid the foundation for the distinctive cultural presence of the Puerto Rican in the United States today.



"EL LEGADO: A Puerto Rican Legacy," a half-hour documentary film produced by Aspira of America, Inc., traces the growth of the Puerto Rican community in New York City in the first half of this century by blending together historical film footage of the era and personal interviews with that migration's pioneers. Because of its documentary nature the 16mm. film has been produced partly in color and partly in black and white. Versions are available both in Spanish and in English.

"EL LEGADO: A Puerto Rican Legacy," can be purchased at a cost of \$410.00 per copy. Rental is \$175.00 for three (3) days or \$100 for a day (24 hours). For more information contact María Figueroa, at Aspira of America, Inc., 205 Lexington Avenue, New York, New York 10016, (212) 889-6101. An accompanying poster is available at \$5.00 per copy.